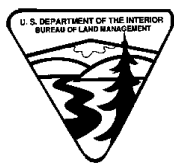


DRAFT

**ANALYSIS OF MANAGEMENT SITUATION AND
CONCEPTUAL RECREATION PLAN
FOR HELLS CANYON COMPLEX
OREGON & IDAHO BLM**



**U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Vale District, Oregon
Lower Snake River District, Idaho**

April 2000

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ANALYSIS OF MANAGEMENT SITUATION AND CONCEPTUAL RECREATION PLAN FOR HELLS CANYON COMPLEX OREGON & IDAHO BLM

INTRODUCTION

The Hells Canyon Complex of three Snake River dams was licensed to Idaho Power Company (IPC) in 1955 by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). The current license expires in 2005. New licenses for hydropower projects will be issued by the FERC for 30-50 years, depending upon the terms and conditions of the license and settlement agreement.

By participating in the FERC relicensing process, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has an opportunity, at this time, to provide recommendations for developing terms and conditions of the new license. Part of the relicensing process involves determining a "desired future condition" for recreation in the Hells Canyon Complex. "Desired future condition" means answering the question of what numbers and types of facilities, if any, should be offered at what locations and how should they be managed while taking into consideration other resource needs and concerns.

A multi-agency working group will be analyzing new studies, reviewing existing management plans, and considering public and Tribal comments to identify desired future conditions for recreation.

Public Involvement & Future Environmental Analysis

This document displays current information on recreation sites, and provides an opportunity for public and Tribal involvement in defining a "desired future condition" for recreation management on BLM-managed lands in the Hells Canyon Complex. For this reason, the document should be considered simply a conceptual plan or potential direction for BLM facilities. It will not result in an environmental analysis or decision at this time. The document is prepared for the purpose of preliminary scoping and gathering public and Tribal comments. Information gathered will be used to modify facility and recreation management proposals for BLM-managed lands as outlined in this document, as part of BLM's participation in the FERC relicensing process.

Proposals for non-BLM lands and considerations of other issues would be considered in their entirety at a later date for full National Environmental Policy Act

(NEPA) analysis, and are not a part of this BLM document. Through the entire relicensing process there will be additional opportunities for public and Tribal comment on recreation and all aspects of the future management of the area. NEPA analysis, along with more opportunities for public comment and Tribal consultation, will be required before project implementation can begin on BLM land. Formal NEPA analysis of the total project will be done by FERC as part of their review of the license application for the Hells Canyon Complex.

Timeline

The relicensing process is best described by working backwards from the license expiration date. The license for this 3-dam complex expires in 2005. Two years prior to license expiration, 2003, the power company is required to submit a final license application to FERC. Three years before license expiration, in 2002, a draft application will be completed. That draft application will include all proposed terms and conditions of the new license with agency, Tribal, and public input.

Beginning now, in 2000, multi-agency working groups are in the process of identify desired future conditions and protection, mitigation, and enhancement measures (PM&E), for recommendation for the draft application.

The exercise at hand is to provide direction for BLM recommendations to IPC on desired future condition and PM&E measures for recreation on BLM lands. The information will be collectively evaluated and integrated with all resource concerns and issues from all affected agencies and interests.

A. STUDY AREA DESCRIPTION

Location

Hells Canyon is located in northeastern Oregon and west-central Idaho on the Snake River. The Snake River, a major tributary to the Columbia River, is the focal point of Hells Canyon and forms part of the boundary between Idaho and Oregon. The Hells Canyon Complex is located in the southern portion of Hells Canyon and is composed of three dams and three reservoirs operated by IPC. Brownlee Dam (constructed in 1958) is located farthest upstream, followed by Oxbow Dam (constructed in 1961), and finally Hells Canyon Dam (constructed in 1967) at the terminal end of reservoir complex.

Population centers located within a 100-mile radius of some portion of Hells Canyon include Baker City,

Richland, Halfway, Clarkston, Asotin, La Grande, Enterprise, Huntington, Ontario, on the Oregon side; and Boise, Caldwell, Cambridge, Council, Fruitland, Grangeville, Lewiston, Payette, Riggins, and Weiser on the Idaho side.

Counties with lands adjacent to the three reservoirs and their respective 1999 population estimates are: Adams County--3,787 and Washington County--10,298 in Idaho (US Census Bureau 1999). In Oregon, Baker County--16,259, Malheur County--28,445, and Wallowa County--7,258, all have lands adjacent to the reservoirs (US Census Bureau 1999).

Eastern Oregon population and employment levels are little changed since the early 1980s. Between 1990 and 1998, total population in this region grew by 7.2 percent versus 14.8 percent for Oregon (Oregon Employment Department 1999).

In Idaho approximately 387,800 people live in the Boise Metropolitan Statistical Area which includes Nampa--41,951 and Caldwell--22,340 (US Census Bureau 1999). The cities of Boise and Meridian are located in Ada County. Ada County's population grew at four times the national rate during the first six years of the decade, a gain of 42,022 residents (Idaho Dept. of Labor 1999).

Hells Canyon Complex

The Hells Canyon complex encompasses and/or influences approximately 193 miles of the Snake River, from Weiser, Idaho to the mouth of Captain John Creek. BLM-administered lands that are affected within the rim-to-rim area occur along 115 miles of the Snake River corridor. These lands are managed by the Vale District in Oregon and Washington, and the Lower Snake River District and Upper Columbia Salmon Clearwater District in Idaho. Approximately 86 miles of BLM-administered land lie along the three reservoirs and 29 miles lie along the Snake River below Hells Canyon dam.

The complex also involves over 700 miles of transmission lines. The transmission lines include 240 miles of BLM-managed lands in Idaho and 21 miles of BLM-managed lands in Oregon for a total of 261 miles on BLM lands. The electric-generating capacity of the project is 1437 megawatts.

For the purpose of this document, the BLM-managed lands along the three reservoirs will be the area of concentration. This area begins approximately 8 miles downstream and west of the town of Weiser, Idaho, continuing downstream along the Snake River to the vicinity of the Hells Canyon Dam.

The Reservoirs

Brownlee Reservoir is 58 miles long and is a steep-sided reservoir with a maximum depth approaching 300 feet near the dam. Large rock outcrops occur throughout the entire length. Shoreline slopes ranging from 20 to 30 percent are most common. Brownlee has the potential of 100-foot drawdowns and is regulated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE) for flood control purposes, and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) for flow augmentation for endangered fish species. Brownlee serves as a sedimentation basin, with waters of notably lower turbidity leaving the Hells Canyon system.

Oxbow Reservoir is 12 miles long and is a small run-of-the-river reservoir surrounded by moderate to steep topography (20 to 75 percent slopes). Oxbow is relatively narrow and shallow, with maximum depths approaching 100 feet. Shorelines are primarily basalt outcrops and talus, except for alluvial fans created by small tributaries. This reservoir has 10 feet of draft and currently fluctuates no more than 6 - 8 feet daily.

Hells Canyon Reservoir is approximately 25 miles long and is a run-of-the-river reservoir with maximum depths approaching 200 feet. Shorelines are generally very steep, with substrates primarily of basalt outcrops and talus slopes. This reservoir has 10 feet of draft and currently fluctuates no more than 6 - 8 feet daily.

Land Management

The Hells Canyon Project is situated within and across the Counties of Baker, Wallowa, and Malheur in Oregon; Asotin County in Washington; and Adams and Washington Counties in Idaho.

The BLM and the Forest Service are responsible for managing the majority of public land in Hells Canyon. Other agencies with natural resource jurisdiction in the greater project area include NMFS, Tribal governments, US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), National Park Service (NPS), and Idaho and Oregon State agencies.

Tribal governments exercise treaty and aboriginal rights and interests through their government-to-government relationship with the United States.

In 1996 IPC entered into an agreement with BLM in Oregon and Idaho for managing the Hells Canyon BLM recreation resources. The agreement is, "to provide for the continuing public use and enjoyment of the Brownlee, Oxbow, and Hells Canyon Reservoirs and adjacent public and IPC lands, and to promote

protection of recreational resource values while considering environmental, aesthetic and cultural resource values.”

B. RECREATION SITES

Recreation facilities on the reservoirs are provided by IPC, USFS, BLM, State of Idaho, State of Oregon, Baker County, Union Pacific Railroad, and private entities.

In addition to the recreation sites listed on the following page, there are over 130 dispersed areas used for recreation. These sites range in size from 1/20 of an acre to almost 60 acres.

The following visitation estimates were reported to FERC from IPC in 1996. Hells Canyon Reservoir 82,691 visits; Oxbow Reservoir 35,102 visits, and Brownlee Reservoir 180,257. A visit equals one person for any portion of one day. Visitation was known to be higher in previous years when crappie fishing was at its peak.

On the Oregon side, BLM manages the Snake River/Mormon Basin National Back Country Byway. This road system is located in Baker and Malheur Counties and covers approximately 130 miles of paved and gravel roads. The Byway begins in Baker City, Oregon; then heads east on State Highway 86 to Richland, then south of Richland on the Snake River Road along Brownlee Reservoir to Huntington; then northwest on Interstate 84 to Rye Valley Exit; then west on BLM and county roads through Mormon Basin to State Highway 7; then north over Dooley Mountain on State Highway 7 to Baker City, Oregon.

The table on the following page summarizes the current features of the most developed or well-known recreation sites on the three reservoirs.

Maps of BLM sites are on page 27 and 28.

HELLS CANYON COMPLEX RECREATION FACILITIES - RESERVOIRS

Sites (moving down river)	ST	Owner Operator	Fees tent & rv or range	Camping Sites RV/Tent	Water	Elect.	Showers	Dump Station	Boat Ramp	Maximum Drawdown Level for Boat Ramp
Snake River RV Park	OR	Private	\$12 & \$15 \$5 ramp	10	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	unknown
Oasis Campground BROWNLEE	OR	Private	\$8 & \$13	23	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	unknown
Oasis BROWNLEE	OR	BLM	0	undefined	N	N	N	N	Y unimproved	undefined
Farewell Bend BROWNLEE	OR	State of Oregon	\$13 to \$18 day use	94 & 45	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	-26
Steck BROWNLEE	ID	BLM on IDFG land	\$5 & \$8 \$2 day	51	Y	N	N	Y	Y	-22
Spring BROWNLEE	OR	BLM	\$5	35 undefined	Y	N	N	N	Y	-23
Mountain Man Resort and Marina BROWNLEE	ID	Private lease on IPC land	closed	lodge closed to public since 1997	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	unknown
Big Deacon Creek BROWNLEE	OR	Private	unknown	undefined	N	N	N	N	Y	undefined
Swedes Landing BROWNLEE	OR	BLM	0	6 undefined	N	N	N	N	Y unimproved	undefined
Hewitt Park BROWNLEE	OR	Baker County	\$10 - \$13 \$2 day	33 + tents	Y	Y	N	N	Y	-36
Woodhead BROWNLEE	ID	IPC	\$6 & \$10	124 & 15	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	-53
McCormick OXBOW	ID	IPC	\$6 & \$10	34	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	na
Carter's Landing OXBOW	OR	IPC on BLM land	\$2 & \$3	undefined	N	N	N	N	Y unimproved	na
Oxbow Boat Launch OXBOW	OR	IPC on BLM land	0	0	N	N	N	N	Y	na
Copperfield HELLS	OR	IPC	\$10 & \$6	62 & 10	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y nearby	na
Hells Canyon HELLS	ID	IPC	\$10 & \$6	24	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	na
Big Bar HELLS	ID	USFS	0	undefined	N	N	N	N	Y	na

C. ISSUES

Summarized below are the generalized issues currently identified by the BLM related to recreation and aesthetic concerns.

- 1) Brownlee water fluctuations on recreation use, recreation site management, and fishing. (See graph on this page.)
- 2) Effects of recreation use on the physical environment.
- 3) Condition and diversity of developed and dispersed recreation sites.
- 4) Access and condition of transportation system.
- 5) Recreation conflicts between users, between users and the private sector, and general law enforcement coverage.
- 6) Need for off-site mitigation of impacts resulting from recreation use.
- 7) Noxious weeds related to dam operations and recreation use.

8) Visual quality as it relates to water fluctuations, recreation use, and dam operations.

IPC will be holding additional public meetings as part of the FERC relicensing process. These will provide opportunities for the public and Tribes to comment on all issues and concerns they may have relating to the planning efforts for the total project area.

The graph on this page represents one of the major issues identified regarding the flow regime.

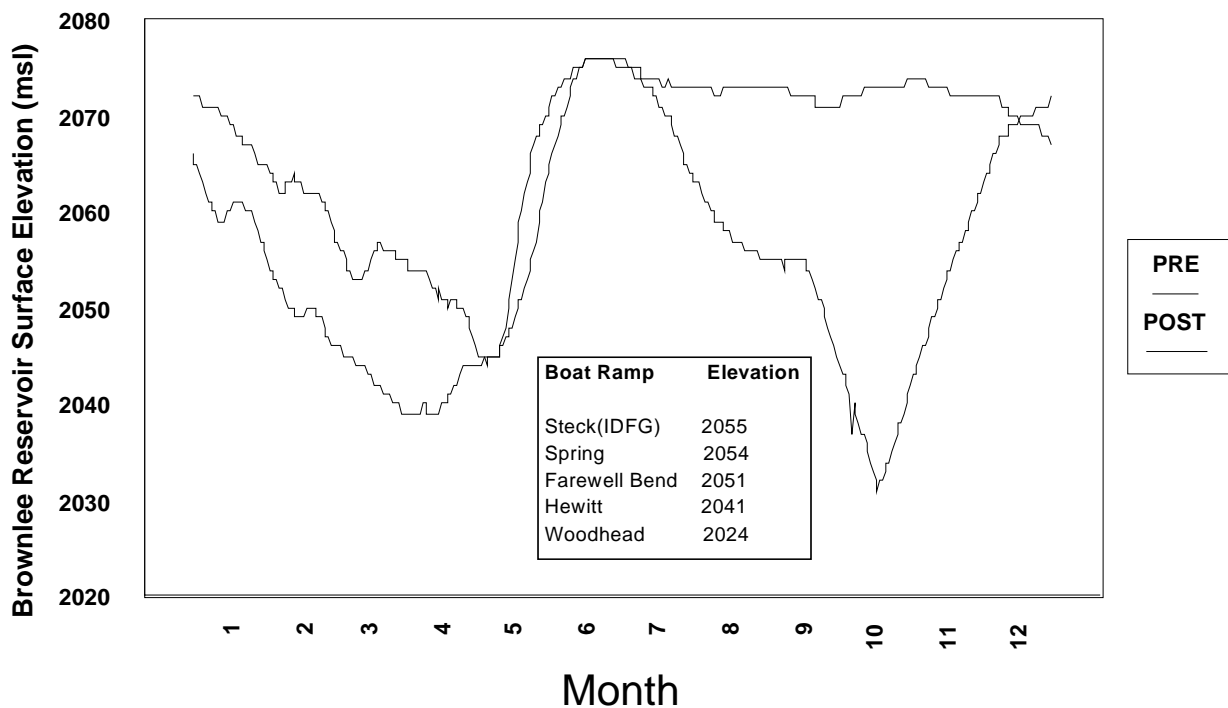
D. PLANNING REQUIREMENTS

The following planning requirements are in place for the purpose of focusing comment to areas of BLM authority.

- 1) The three Hells Canyon Complex dams remain in place and in operation for the life of the license (30 to 50 years).

Rationale: The FERC process requires that analysis be done considering continued operation of the area for hydroelectric power generation. This does not reflect any decision or recommendation by BLM or

Brownlee - Mean Daily Surface Elevation



Pre = before salmon flows (1969 through 1991)
Post = after salmon flows (1992 through 1998)

any other agency. This is simply a planning requirement for this stage of the process. Other alternatives will be analyzed during the relicensing process.

2) Reservoir levels and river flows are outside the scope of this document at this time.

Rationale: BLM recognizes that flows are of major concern. The flow issue will be explored and addressed during the greater relicensing process. Recreation planning will include considerations for possible changes in operations.

3) Only lands currently administered by BLM that are physically suited for recreation development will be addressed in the conceptual plan.

Rationale: BLM can only plan for known resources at this time. Land acquisitions or exchanges will remain possible, and environmental analysis will be required and completed for any such actions if and when they occur.

4) Oxbow Boat Launch and Carter's Landing recreation sites on Oxbow Reservoir will continue to be operated by IPC under permit from BLM.

Rationale: IPC has the resources to best manage the sites based out of their facilities at Oxbow Dam. BLM will continue to provide input to their management during relicensing and beyond through the permit and Memorandum of Understanding with with IPC.

E. SOCIAL INFORMATION

IPC conducted recreation visitor surveys beginning in 1994. Peak season information is reported for 1995, 1996, 1997, and 1998. Sample size for peak seasons was 26,237 total respondents. Non-peak information is reported for 1995/1996 and 1996/1997, and 1997/98. Sample size for non-peak season information was 3354 respondents. These are preliminary results provided courtesy of IPC.

RECREATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS	PEAK SEASON May - October	NONPEAK SEASON November - April
STATE OF RESIDENCE Oregon Idaho Washington	 47% 38% 7%	 39% 54% 4%
GENDER Male Female	 66% 34%	 77% 23%
RACE White Hispanic African American Asian Native American	 92% 3% 2% 2% <1%	 95% 3% 2% 2% <1%
INCOME <\$10,000 \$10,000 to \$30,000 \$30,000 to \$50,000 \$50,000 to \$70,000 \$70,000	 7% 36% 32% 15% 10%	 10% 41% 33% 13% 5%
RETIRED	30%	23%
AGE (mean)	45	43
GROUP SIZE (mean # people by group) Adults Children Total people	 3.3 0.7 4.0	 2.6 0.5 3.1
LENGTH OF STAY (mean # days)	4.8	3.9
TYPE OF VISIT Overnight to developed park Overnight to nonpark Day use	 49% 35% 19%	 24% 27% 50%
BOAT USE Motorized Nonmotorized	 49% 2%	 14% 2%
ACTIVITIES (% of respondents) Fishing Camping Boating Hunting Swimming Nature Watching Lounging Other	 80% 60% 9% 2% 4% 6% 7% 8%	 78% 35% <1% 5% 0% 9% 5% 12%

F. ECONOMICS

Economic information was also collected during the recreation visitor surveys conducted by Idaho Power Company beginning in 1994. Expenditures are mean dollars (arithmetic average) spent during peak and nonpeak seasons averaged by study years for respondents 18 and older. Peak season information is reported for 1995, 1996 and 1998. Non-peak information is reported for 1995/1996 and 1996/1997. Sample size for peak season information was 12,827 respondents. Sample size for non-peak season information was 1,202 respondents. These are preliminary results provided courtesy of IPC.

ITEM	PEAK SEASON May - October dollars per respondent	NONPEAK SEASON November - April dollars per respondent
Gas (Vehicle & Boat) per trip	51	27
Food & Drink per trip	55	27
Lodging & Camping Fees per trip	16	5
Bait & Tackle per trip	8	6
License Fees per trip	6	6
Other per trip	7	2
*Total Expenditures for Non-durable Goods Per Trip	138	71
Daily Expenditures for Non-durable Goods	36	27
Daily Expenditures for Non-durable Goods Made in Bordering Towns	34	na
Percentage of Total Expenditures in Bordering Towns	25	na
Recreation Equipment Expenditures (durable goods purchased over previous month)	247	138
Length of stay (mean # days)	4.8	3.9

* Totals will not equal sum of columns exactly because respondents' answers do not total to 100%.

G. BIOLOGICAL AND PHYSICAL INFORMATION

Physiography

Hells Canyon is one of the deepest and most rugged river gorges in the continental United States. It ranges between 2,000 feet to 3,000 feet in depth from Weiser to Oxbow Dam. Below Oxbow Dam, the river enters a narrow, steep-sided chasm that is up to 5,500 feet deep. Throughout the canyon, topography is generally steep and broken with slopes often dominated by rock outcrops and talus slopes.

Climate

Hells Canyon is located in the High Desert region and is significantly influenced by the rain shadow of the Cascade Mountain range. The area is arid to semi-arid with warm to hot, dry summers and relatively cold winters (Harker et al. 1993 from IPC 1997). Climatological records from Brownlee Dam (RM 284.6) indicate that the canyon bottom area is dry with seasonal temperatures ranging from lows of about 36 degrees F. in January, to highs of about 110 degrees F. in July. The average annual precipitation ranges from about 15 to 20 inches, depending on elevation. Nearly 45 percent of the average annual precipitation at Brownlee falls from November through January. This is strongly contrasted by rainfall from July through September, when only about 9 percent of the yearly average is recorded.

Soils

The soils throughout Hells Canyon are composed primarily of Columbia River Basalt, covered in most areas with a thin mantle of residual soils from weathered native rock. Isolated areas contain deposits of windblown silt. The amount of soil cover declines northward through Hells Canyon.

Most soil complexes are well drained and vary from very shallow to moderately deep. Loams are the dominant textural class and vary from very stony to silty, often with a clay subsoil component (Natural Resources Conservation Service 1995, from IPC 1997).

Soils in the Snake River Canyon can erode severely with heavy storm events or in areas of bare soils. Facility locations will need to be carefully considered and vegetation, erosion barriers, and soil catchments may be necessary at some sites.

Water Quality

The Snake River within the Hells Canyon Complex is listed by the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) as an Oregon Water Quality Limited Stream. This is because of summer temperatures 11 degrees

over the water quality standard of 64 degrees and presence of sediment and nutrients. Predominant water quality impacts in the study area are from nonpoint-source activities (Idaho Department of Health & Welfare and Idaho Department of Fish & Game 1989, from IPC 1997). Nonpoint-source activities which have been identified as accounting for the majority of impacts include agriculture, forest practices, construction, and hydrologic/habitat modifications.

Cold water-dependent organisms and salmonid spawning are partially supported, and other beneficial uses are potentially at risk upstream of Brownlee Reservoir (IDHW and IDFG 1989, from IPC 1997). In Brownlee, Oxbow, and Hells Canyon reservoirs, cold water-dependent organisms are partially supported, but salmonid spawning is not supported.

According to the DEQ Water Quality Standards, no projects can contribute to raising the temperature in the river or adding pollutants to the river.

Fish

Historically the Snake River was a cold water fishery that supported anadromous fish species such as chinook salmon, steelhead, and Pacific lamprey. The Hells Canyon dams are barriers for anadromous (ocean-dependent) fish. Snake River spring/summer chinook, fall chinook, steelhead, and bull trout are listed as threatened species under the Endangered Species Act.

The dams created reservoirs that slowed and varied the natural river flow, creating a habitat suitable for warm water fisheries. Many species of introduced fishes are well established in the study area and provide fisheries for recreation. Channel catfish, large and small-mouth bass, crappie, and carp were all species introduced to the area. White sturgeon continue to persist in isolated reaches, however, populations are assumed to be depressed. Bull trout, redband trout, and rainbow trout (native) have been caught in the pools behind the dams.

According to a 1990 creel census on Brownlee Reservoir by IDFG, crappie comprised 65 percent of the total catch and harvest, bass comprised 28 percent, yellow perch 2 percent, channel catfish 2 percent, trout 1 percent, and bluegill 1 percent (IPC 1997).

In 1991, IPC initiated research on the resident fish in Brownlee, primarily to address potential effects of water-level fluctuations on resident fish populations. These studies are still on-going.

Cultural

The Snake River Canyon area has been inhabited by people since time immemorial. Tribal history and archaeological studies show that people wintered in the canyon; hunted and fished along the river and uplands; gathered plants for food, medicine and industry; and assembled for trade and social exchange. For more than 10,000 years, the Snake River and adjoining uplands were used by many people that later came to be known as the Nez Perce, Cayuse, Umatilla, Walla Walla, Paiute, Shoshone, and Bannock tribes.

The Lewis and Clark expedition of 1805, and the Wilson Price Hunt expedition of 1811, initiated an influx of fur traders, explorers, military, miners, and homesteaders throughout the 19th century. Into the 20th century, emigrants established ranches, orchards, gold mines, ferries and railroads along the Snake River. In the mid-1800s, conflicts between these newcomers and native people resulted in the forced removal of Tribes from their aboriginal lands. Land was appropriated for Euro-American settlement through treaties in which Tribal Nations reserved many rights and privileges. Today, Tribal governments exercise treaty and aboriginal rights and interests through their government-to-government relationship with the United States.

Archaeological sites, traditional cultural places, and oral histories provide evidence of a complex pattern of land use through the millennia, and tell a story about events and people who live on the land. To this day, the Snake River canyon is a landscape of heritage and cultural importance for the public and Tribes. Cultural resource studies and inventories are being conducted to identify historic and archaeological properties in the Hells Canyon Complex. Studies are ongoing, but not yet completed. Cultural resource inventory and evaluation, and consultation with Tribes are prerequisite to any future recreation development proposal. Cultural resources are managed for their important information and socio-cultural values.

Wildlife

The bald eagle is a federally designated *threatened* species known to occur in Hells Canyon. The wolf, listed as *endangered*, may occur as a transient. A male gray wolf was killed near Huntington in 1974. Wolves from a reintroduced population in Idaho have crossed Hells Canyon.

The USFWS has also indicated they have concerns about the following species of wildlife that are known to occur or have the potential to occur in Hells Canyon: the California wolverine, Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep, northern sagebrush lizard, the ferruginous hawk, yellow-billed cuckoo, mountain quail, long-billed curlew, and seven species of bats.

Although these species have no status under the Endangered Species Act, biologists are concerned about their population status and threats to long-term viability. Also occurring in the area are accipiter hawks including the prairie falcon, sharp-shinned hawk, and Cooper's hawk. Other birds of prey that may nest or feed in the area include the red-tailed hawk, Swainson's hawk, and golden eagle. These species are BLM species of concern and are to be considered when planning any activities on BLM lands.

In addition to the species mentioned above, there are many species of wildlife known to occur within Hells Canyon that are of special interest to the hunting public. Species include: mule deer, elk, chukar, many waterfowl species, mourning dove, and wild turkey.

Vegetation

The types of vegetation occurring along the canyon slopes of the Middle Snake River are the result of three primary ecological factors: topography, soils, and climate. Of these three considerations, climate exerts the strongest influence on the development of plant life. The relatively mild winters below the canyon rim have allowed the development of disjunct species such as hackberry, which is most often found in the southwestern states, but commonly occurs in the Middle Snake River area (Tisdale 1979, from IPC 1997). Grassland, shrubland, riparian, and coniferous forest communities exist in close proximity.

With the settlement of Hells Canyon, large numbers of cattle were introduced into the area's rangelands which were grazed until the 1920s. At this time, cattle grazing was mostly replaced by sheep grazing (Tisdale 1986a, from IPC 1997). Overgrazing was already considered to be a serious problem in the early 1900s. By the 1940s, however, a shift back to cattle occurred and numerous cattle feedlots were developed along the Snake River (Asherin and Claar 1976, from IPC 1997).

The existing plant communities range from low-elevation shrub-steppe desert and grasslands to high-elevation coniferous forest and subalpine communities. Vegetation types consist of perennial grasses, big sagebrush, bunchgrass, big sagebrush/annual grass, and mixed shrub plant communities that occur on mid- and lower-elevation intermountain rangelands (USDI 1986, from IPC 1997). The shrub-steppe vegetation in the Northwest has been extensively changed by humans through raising crops, irrigation, livestock grazing, and introduction of exotic plants and noxious weeds.

For restoration work it is BLM policy that where possible, native plant species shall be used in ecosystem management. Non-native plant materials may be used when no other feasible alternative exists.

H. OREGON AND IDAHO RECREATION SITES

The following 12 sites are areas that the BLM proposes to upgrade. Seven sites are identified for BLM-administered lands in Oregon and can be found on the maps on page 27 and 28. Five sites are identified for BLM-managed lands in Idaho and can be found on the map on page 27.

These sites were found to have the most potential and be most suitable for recreation improvements. General recommendations for the recreation management of other BLM-managed lands can be found on page 25.

Comments are welcome on these proposed improvements and planning recommendations. For convenience, a comment form is provided on page 30. Feel free to use this form, or any format, to provide BLM with your comments about these proposals. All comments must be received by **June 5, 2000** for consideration. Mail comments to:

Vicki Kellerman - Recreation Planner
BLM Baker Resource Area
3165 10th Street
Baker City, OR 97814

Site Name:	OASIS (see map - page 27)
Location:	Oregon side of Brownlee Reservoir along Hwy 201 between I-84 and Weiser. T15S, R46E, Sec 18
County:	Malheur
Approximate size:	3 acres
Adjacent owner(s):	Private
Current amenities:	unimproved boat ramp, 1 vault toilet, 2 picnic tables, 2 fire rings
Boat access:	deep, non-hazardous
Visitor Information:	
Visitor use estimate for 1999:	450 visitor days (1 visitor for 12 hours)
Current visitor profile:	fishermen, boat launch users, both overnight and day use
Other site information:	adjacent to 2 private RV parks
Existing Planning Direction:	
BLM RMP recreation direction	Provide and enhance developed and undeveloped recreation opportunities, while protecting resources, to manage the increasing demand for resource-dependent recreation activities.
Planning Constraints:	Visual Resource Management Class III - Change attracts attention but is not dominant
	Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance
	Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) requirements for vault toilets
	Subject to cultural resource inventory and evaluation
Identified Needs:	
	develop boat ramp and amenities
	expand parking
	shade
Proposed Improvements:	
	develop boat ramp and amenities
	define and level road, camping spurs, and parking within the area
	define 4-7 universal camping sites for improved recreation experience, efficient use of space, and resource protection
	expand parking on south side of road
	install vehicle barriers as needed
	develop up to 3 picnicking sites
	plant and protect drought-resistant shade trees
	pursue acquisition of water rights for irrigation system for trees
	foot trail
	watchable wildlife Interpretation
	fire rings
	dumpster
	public access signing
	noxious weed control as needed
	law enforcement coverage
	maintenance coverage

Site Name:	SPRING RECREATION SITE (see map - page 27)
Location:	Oregon side of Brownlee Res. Approx. 3 miles from the town of Huntington. 1 mile downstream from mouth of the Burnt River.
County:	Baker
Approximate Size:	20 acres
Adjacent Owners:	IPC, BLM
Current Amenities:	boat ramp, boarding float, 6 vault toilets, potable water during summer season, picnic tables, dumpsters, fish cleaning station, several undefined camping areas
Boat Access:	good, except at low water (-23 ft.). Large rocks just off shore from boat ramp at lower water.
Visitor Information:	
Visitor Use Estimate for 1999:	14,000 visitor days, (1 visitor for 12 hours). Total of campground fees collected was \$2,500 at \$5.00 per vehicle for overnight use from May 1 to October 31.
Current Visitor Profile:	Most visitors are day-users and are there to fish. 46% of campground users are seniors. 68% of campground users are from Oregon.
Other site information:	Area was re-built in 1990 to accommodate high day-use and boat ramp demand. Today's use is closely correlated with reservoir levels and fishing opportunities. Has close access to interstate highway. Site is primarily used for boat launching and fishing. BLM fire crew is stationed in adjacent facility during the summer months.
Existing Planning Direction:	
BLM RMP recreation direction:	Baker County Geographical Unit - maintain scenic quality, enhance recreation opportunities
Planning constraints:	Visual Resource Management Class II - Change is visible but does not attract attention
	Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulations
	Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) requirements for vault toilets, and drain fields. FDA regulations on fish grinder facilities
	Subject to cultural resource inventory and evaluation
	Botanical clearance for Haplopappus (BLM sensitive species) may be needed
Identified Needs:	
	need more desirable RV and picnic spaces and vehicle turnarounds
	separate potable and irrigation water systems
	fish grinder and drainfield are not to current code
	shade trees and/or structures are desired
	low water boat ramp is desired
	tent campers need convenient parking to access lower site
Proposed Improvements:	
	develop new loop road for campground area to allow for vehicles to safely turn around
	define 12-20 universal camping sites for improved recreation experience, efficient use of space, and resource protection
	investigate possibilities of new well - separate potable water system from irrigation water
	low maintenance irrigation system to support shade trees
	fish grinder improvements - may need to replace, relocate, and add lift station and drain field
	improve the lower walk-in tent camping area with nearby parking and ADA toilet
	work with Oregon Marine Board on potential boat ramp improvements
	develop overflow parking on west side of road as needed
	and anchor new ADA picnic tables and fire ring

Proposed Improvements:	(SPRING RECREATION SITE continued)
	add campground host site with full hook-ups.
	add electric hookups to several sites
	add water hookups to all RV/camping sites
	install several small shade structures for picnic use in view of water
	add, remove, replace toilets as needed
	dumpsters
	firerings
	noxious weed control as needed
	law enforcement coverage
	maintenance coverage
	consider access road maintenance and/or improvements
	consider mitigation for off-site impacts originating from site use (i.e., road use)

Site Name:	SWEDE'S LANDING (see map - page 27)
Location:	Oregon side of Brownlee Res. Approx. 26.3 miles downstream from Spring Recreation Site. River Mile 304.3
County:	Baker
Approximate size:	5 acres
Adjacent owners:	private
Current amenities:	unimproved boat ramp, 2 vault toilets, camping regulation sign
Boat access:	shallow, gentle grade, frequently used as unimproved boat ramp
Visitor information:	
Visitor use estimate for 1999	6500 visitor days (1 visitor for 12 hours).
Current visitor profile:	mostly day use for boat launching and fishing
Other site information:	One of the first places to access Brownlee reservoir on the Snake River Road coming from the Richland/Halfway area. Very popular area to launch boats and fish due to proximity to Richland and Halfway.
Existing Planning Direction:	
BLM RMP recreation direction:	Lookout Mtn. Geographic Unit: maintain scenic quality; enhance recreation opportunities for hunting, sightseeing and hiking.
Planning constraints:	Visual Resource Management Class II - Change is visible but does not attract attention
	Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance
	Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) requirements for vault toilets
	Subject to cultural resource inventory and evaluation
	Site lacks the needed 12.5% to 15% grade for improved boat ramp. Quicksand Creek deposits sediments directly upstream from this site. Area of public land is very small and is surrounded on 3 sides by private land. Site is in area at risk for flash floods.
Identified Needs:	
	improved boat parking, camping and picnicking opportunities.
	improved sanitation
	protection and enhancement of riparian area at Quicksand Creek - possible fencing
Proposed Improvements:	
	define and level road, camping spurs, and parking within area
	define 6-8 universal camping sites for improved recreation experience, efficient use of space, and resource protection
	surface roads and spurs with small diameter crushed rock
	install toilet(s) as needed
	dumpster
	fire rings
	public access signing
	noxious weed control as needed
	plant and protect drought-resistant shade trees
	pursue acquisition of water rights for irrigation system for trees
	law enforcement coverage
	maintenance coverage
	consider access road maintenance and/or improvements
	consider mitigation for off-site impacts originating from site use (i.e., road use)

Site Name:	WESTFALL (see map - page 28)
Location:	Oregon side of Hell's Canyon Reservoir approx. 1.3 miles downstream from the town of Oxbow along the Oxbow-Homestead Road. Site is both above and below the road just north of tunnel. River mile 268.5
County:	Baker
Approximate Size:	5 acres
Adjacent Owner(s):	BLM
Current Amenities:	1 seasonal toilet, regulations sign
Boat Access:	deep, non-hazardous
Visitor Information:	
Visitor Use estimate for 1999:	6,000 visitor days, (1 visitor for 12 hours).
Current Visitor Profile:	fishermen, water access. both day and overnight use.
Other site information:	narrow one-way tunnel just before site
Existing Planning Direction:	
BLM RMP recreation direction:	Homestead Geographic Unit - maintain wilderness values of the McGraw Creek Wilderness Area and the McGraw Creek and Homestead Wilderness Study Area's (WSA's), maintain scenic quality, enhance opportunities for primitive recreation.
Planning Constraints:	Visual Resource Management Class II - Change is visible but does not attract attention
	Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance
	Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) requirements for vault toilets
	Subject to cultural resource inventory and evaluation
Identified Needs:	
	level parking
	improved access road
	toilet(s)
Proposed Improvements:	
	level and improve roads to sites
	define parking and camping areas
	define 5-8 universal camping sites for improved recreation experience, efficient use of space, and resource protection
	surface roads and camping spurs with small diameter crushed rock
	install ADA toilet(s) as needed
	dumpster
	fire rings
	public access signing
	noxious weed control as needed
	law enforcement coverage
	maintenance coverage
	consider access road maintenance and/or improvements
	consider mitigation for off-site impacts originating from site use (i.e., road use)

Site Name:	BOB CREEK - SECTION C (see map - page 28)
Location:	Oregon side of Hell's Canyon Res. Approx. 1.8 miles downstream from the town of Oxbow along the Oxbow-Homestead Road. River mile 267.9.
County:	Baker
Approximate size:	5 acres
Adjacent owners:	BLM, IPC
Current amenities:	1 vault toilet, unimproved boat ramp, bulletin board
Boat access:	shallow, hazardous
Visitor Information:	
Visitor use estimate for 1999:	2500 visitor days, (1 visitor for 12 hours).
Current visitor profile:	fishermen and water access. both overnight & day use
Other site information:	Canadian geese are known to use area, new vault toilet was installed in 1997
Planning Direction:	
BLM RMP recreation direction:	Homestead geographic unit - maintain wilderness values of the McGraw Creek Wilderness Area and the McGraw Creek and Homestead Wilderness Study Area's (WSA's), maintain scenic quality, enhance opportunities for primitive recreation.
Planning constraints:	Visual Resource Management Class II - Change is visible but does not attract attention
	Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance
	Subject to cultural resource inventory and evaluation
	Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) requirements for vault toilets
Identified needs:	
	level parking sites
	shade
	turn around for south section of site
Proposed improvements:	
	define and level road, camping spurs, and parking within area
	develop turn around for south section of site that currently dead ends
	define 10-14 universal camping sites (total for both sections of Bob Creek C) for improved recreation experience, efficient use of space, and resource protection
	surface roads and camping spurs with small diameter crushed rock
	identify, rehabilitate, and protect areas for vegetation growth and shade tree starts
	pursue acquiring water rights for tree irrigation
	add additional vault toilet
	dumpster
	fire rings
	public access signing
	law enforcement coverage
	maintenance coverage
	noxious weed control as needed
	consider access road maintenance and/or improvements
	consider mitigation for off-site impacts originating from site use (i.e., road use)

Site Name:	AIRSTRIP - SECTION A (see map - page 28)
Location:	Oregon side of Hell's Canyon Res. approx. 2.8 miles downstream from the town of Oxbow along the Oxbow-Homestead Road. Site is on west side of road away from water. River mile 266.9.
County:	Baker
Approximate size:	1 acre
Adjacent owners:	IPC
Current amenities:	1 seasonal portable toilet, 1 older fixed picnic table, spring pipe (non-potable water), regulation sign
Boat access:	none, as is. Unimproved boat ramp on IPC land nearby. deep, non-hazardous.
Visitor Information:	
Visitor use estimate for 1999:	500 visitor days, (1 visitor for 12 hours).
Current visitor profile:	Mostly RV overnight and use.
Other site information:	Site is located on west side of Homestead road with no direct water access due to large blackberry patch along shoreline. Small unimproved IPC recreation site located just upstream from this site does offer water access. Adjacent IPC land may offer opportunities for development.
Existing Planning Direction:	
BLM RMP recreation direction:	Homestead Geographic Unit: maintain wilderness values of the McGraw Creek Wilderness Area and the McGraw Creek and Homestead Wilderness Study Area's (WSA's), maintain scenic quality, enhance opportunities for primitive recreation.
Planning constraints:	Visual Resource Management Class II - Change is visible but does not attract attention
	Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance
	Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) requirements for vault toilets
	Subject to cultural resource inventory and evaluation
Identified needs:	
	level parking sites
	sanitation
	access to water
	shade
Proposed improvements:	
	define and level road, camping spurs, and parking within area
	define 5-6 universal camping sites for improved recreation experience, efficient use of space, and resource protection
	surface roads and spurs with small diameter crushed rock
	identify, rehabilitate, and protect areas for vegetation growth and shade tree starts
	pursue improving access to water by some blackberry removal, rip rap, or other means
	toilet(s)
	dumpster
	fire rings
	public access signing
	law enforcement coverage
	maintenance coverage
	noxious weed control as needed
	consider access road maintenance and/or improvements
	consider mitigation for off-site impacts originating from site use (i.e., road use)

Site Name:	COPPER CREEK (see map - page 28)
Location:	Oregon side of Hells Canyon Res. approx. 5 miles downstream from Homestead at the end of the Oxbow-Homestead Road. River mile 260.7.
County:	Wallowa
Approximate Size:	10 acres
Adjacent Owner(s):	IPC, HCNRA, & private
Current Amenities:	seasonal toilet, bulletin board, regulation sign
Boat Access:	shallow, hazardous
Visitor Information:	
Visitor Use Estimate for 1999:	3,800 visitor days, (1 visitor for 12 hours).
Current Visitor Profile:	trailhead users, stock rigs, both day and overnight users accessing reservoir
Other site information:	Site is located at end of Homestead road. Last 3 miles of access road are narrow and turn around areas for large vehicles are limited. Site serves as undeveloped trailhead for McGraw Creek Trail which accesses the HCNRA to the north.
Planning Direction:	
BLM RMP direction:	Homestead Geographic Unit - maintain wilderness values of the McGraw Creek Wilderness Area and the McGraw Creek and Homestead Wilderness Study Area's (WSA's), maintain scenic quality, enhance opportunities for primitive recreation.
Planning constraints:	Visual Resource Management Class II - Change is visible but does not attract attention
	Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance
	Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) requirements for vault toilets
	Subject to cultural resource inventory and evaluation
	Botanical clearance for <i>Silene spaldingii</i> (proposed threatened plant) will be needed in the grassland
	Consideration of proximity to Wilderness Study Areas
Identified Needs:	
	safe turnaround for vehicles
	trailhead parking area
	level camping areas in proximity to water, shade
	sanitation
Proposed Improvements:	
	develop loop for access road to allow for safe turnaround of vehicles and reduce erosion
	define and level road, camping spurs, and parking within area
	define 10-14 camping sites for improved recreation experience, efficient use of space, and resource protection
	surface roads and spurs with small diameter crushed rock
	trailhead parking area with capacity for some large rigs including horse trailers
	identify, rehabilitate, and protect areas for vegetation growth and shade tree starts
	pursue acquiring water rights for tree irrigation
	install ADA toilets as needed
	dumpster, fire rings
	pursue improving access to water in several key areas by removing undesirable vegetation, rip rap, or other means.
	public access signing
	law enforcement coverage and maintenance coverage
	noxious weed control as needed
	consider access road maintenance and/or improvements and limitations
	consider mitigation for off-site impacts originating from site use (i.e., road use)

I. IDAHO RECREATION SITES

Site Name:	SNAKE RIVER BOAT LAUNCH (see map - page 27)
Location:	Idaho side of Brownlee Reservoir approximately 11 miles from Weiser and along Steck Park Road. T11N, R7W, Sec 24, Lot 5,4
County:	Washington
Approximate size:	10 acres
Adjacent owner(s):	private
Current amenities:	none. impromptu boat ramp.
Boat access:	shallow, often riffely with river current; steep bank. separated by railroad.
Visitor Information:	
Visitor use estimate for 1999:	200 visitor days, (1 visitor for 12 hours).
Current visitor profile:	fishermen, boat launch users
Other site information:	unimproved boat launch
Existing Planning Direction:	
BLM RMP recreation direction:	Future developed boat launch site (if railroad becomes abandoned)
Planning constraints:	Visual Resource Management Class II - Change can be visible but does not attract attention
	Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance
	Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) requirements for vault toilets
	Subject to cultural resource inventory and evaluation
Identified Needs:	
	access road improvement
Proposed Improvements:	
	access road improvement
	toilet
	boat launch in the long term
	noxious weed control as needed
	law enforcement coverage
	maintenance coverage

Site Name:	WEISER SAND DUNES - SECTION B (see map - page 27)
Location:	Idaho side of Brownlee Reservoir approximately 9.9 miles upstream from Steck Park and 69.4 miles upstream from Brownlee Dam along Old's Ferry Road. River mile 335.6.
County:	Washington
Approximate Size:	200+ acres
Adjacent Owner(s):	US Government, IPC, State of Idaho
Current Amenities:	none
Boat Access:	shallow, hazardous and blocked by railroad
Visitor Information:	
Visitor Use estimate for 1999:	5,000 visitor days, (1 visitor for 12 hours).
Current Visitor Profile:	primarily OHV users, some camping and fishing.
Other site information:	sand dune area. very little shade. boundary is east side of railroad right of way.
Existing Planning Direction:	
BLM RMP recreation direction:	Manage as an OHV play area
Planning Constraints:	Visual Resource Management Class II - Change is visible but does not attract attention
	Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance
	Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) requirements for vault toilets
	Subject to cultural resource inventory and evaluation
Identified Needs:	
	access road improvement
	toilet(s)
	kiosk, area map (for information on where to ride)
	expanded trail riding areas (access to BLM lands and possibly other lands)
	camping area
	potable water
Proposed Improvements:	
	access road improvement - bituminous surface treatment or blacktop
	toilets (3)
	defined parking area
	boundary fencing and other barriers
	signing
	trail route markers
	kiosk, area map, etc.
	access agreements for expanded trail riding opportunities
	noxious weed control as needed
	law enforcement coverage
	maintenance coverage
	consider mitigation for off-site impacts originating from site use

Site Name:	STECK REC SITE (see map - page 27)
Location:	Idaho side of Brownlee Reservoir approximately 20 miles northwest of Weiser. Access is off Hwy 95, Weiser, Idaho. River mile 327.8
County:	Washington
Approximate size:	37+ acres
Adjacent owner(s):	IPC and private
Current amenities:	51 camping sites including 4 group sites, 2 boat ramps and docks, fish cleaning station, accessible toilets, potable water, dump station.
Boat access:	good, except when reservoir is down more than 22' from full pool.
Visitor Information:	
Visitor use estimate for 1999:	3,270 visitor days, (1 visitor for 12 hours).
Current visitor profile:	fishermen, boat ramp users, campers and day use
Other site information:	Campground was recently expanded and renovated. New low water boat ramp functions to 2,055ft. reservoir level. (Full pool is 2077 ft.) Camping fees are \$8 RV site, \$5 tent site, and \$2 day-use. South end of campground is close to major railroad line.
Existing Planning Direction:	
BLM RMP recreation direction:	Recreation tourism destination
Planning constraints:	Visual Resource Management Class II - Change is visible but does not attract attention
	Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance
	Subject to cultural resource inventory and evaluation
Identified Needs:	
	improved communications to and from site (phone services)
	access road improvement
	noxious weed control
Proposed Improvements:	
	phone services at site
	access road improvement - bituminous surface treatment or blacktop
	kiosk posters and area maps
	interpretive displays
	day use picnic pads and tables
	connecting trail from campground to boat launch
	shade cabana at host site
	shade cabanas at some of new campsites (group areas)
	noxious weed control
	law enforcement coverage
	maintenance coverage
	consider mitigation for off-site impacts originating from site use (ie, road use, etc.)

Site Name:	KEVIN'S ALLUVIAL FAN (see map - page 27)
Location:	Idaho side of Brownlee Reservoir approximately 1.5 miles downstream from Steck Park and 58 miles upstream from Brownlee Dam along Old's Ferry Road (unmaintained portion). River mile 326.7.
County:	Washington
Approximate size:	20+ acres
Adjacent owner(s):	Idaho Power Company, BLM
Current amenities:	none
Boat access:	shallow, marginal
Visitor Information:	
Visitor use estimate for 1999:	no estimate available
Current visitor profile:	fishermen access. both day and overnight use.
Other site information:	boundary is 23' vertically above high water. BLM portion of this site is small, if any.
Existing Planning Direction:	
BLM RMP recreation direction:	dispersed recreation, minimal developments
Planning constraints:	Visual Resource Management Class II - Change is visible but does not attract attention
	Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance
	Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) requirements for vault toilets
	Subject to cultural resource inventory and evaluation
Identified Needs:	
	access road improvement
	sanitation
	noxious weed control
Proposed Improvements:	
	access road improvement
	toilet(s)
	information kiosk, area map
	noxious weed control as needed

Site Name:	JENNIFER'S ALLUVIAL FAN (see map - page 27)
Location:	Idaho side of Brownlee Reservoir approximately 3.7 miles downstream from Steck Park and 55.8 miles upstream from Brownlee Dam along Old's Ferry Road (unmaintained portion). River mile 324.6.
County:	Washington
Approximate size:	10+ acres
Adjacent owner(s):	US Government, IPC
Current amenities:	none
Boat access:	shallow, marginal
Visitor Information:	
Visitor use estimate for 1999:	no estimate available
Current visitor profile:	fishermen access, both day and overnight use
Other site information:	boundary is 350+' horizontally above high water
Existing Planning Direction:	
BLM RMP recreation direction:	potential dispersed recreation use site
Planning constraints:	Visual Resource Management Class II - Change is visible but does not attract attention
	Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance
	Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) requirements for vault toilets
	Subject to cultural resource inventory and evaluation
Identified Needs:	
	access road improvement
	law enforcement coverage
	maintenance coverage
	improved sanitation
	information kiosk
	noxious weed control
Proposed Improvements:	
	access road improvement (BSI or black top to Steck, all weather gravel from end of road to site)
	toilet(s)
	information kiosk, area map

Other identified needs for Idaho dispersed sites include:

- 1) Road upgrade and maintenance for road from Steck Park to Rock Creek for fishermen and hunter access.
- 2) Sanitation between Steck and Brownlee Creek.
- 3) Sanitation near Oxbow area hotspots.
- 4) Sanitation for Sturgill Creek boat-in primitive campsites.
- 5) Sanitation on Idaho BLM sites (administered by IPC) between Woodhead and Brownlee Dam.

J. GENERAL PLANNING RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are made for all recreation sites including the 12 previously described sites and all other BLM lands along the reservoirs that may provide recreation opportunities.

- a) Offer a range of recreation opportunities within the Complex from primitive to full service, and from no cost to charge-for-service.
- b) Strive to keep fees reasonable for all users. Tie fees to level of services provided.
- c) New facilities should use high quality designs and materials for long-term low maintenance costs.
- d) Design new facilities to be aesthetically pleasing, and compatible with their surrounding environment.
- e) Improve signing to clearly identify lands open to the public and prevent trespass use.
- f) Match access road conditions with level of facility development.
- g) Phase construction of facilities to visitor use levels, resource conditions, and public safety.
- h) Provide facilities for people with a range of physical abilities throughout the complex.
- i) Identify areas for wildlife habitat, wildlife viewing and interpretation opportunities.
- j) Make rules and regulations consistent between agencies within the entire Hells Canyon Complex.
- k) Provide for sanitation, (toilets and trash collection), at areas of concentrated use.
- l) Maintain and revitalize the Snake River/Mormon Basin Back Country Byway program. Needed items include new signs to help motorists find the Byway, maps and informational handouts, and interpretive materials.
- m) Improve pull-offs for bank angling and hunting access at key locations.
- n) Work with Oregon State Marine Board to identify opportunities and locations to improve boating facilities.
- o) Monitor use and manage the area to maintain its beauty and natural resource values for the long-term.

p) Design facilities with a variety of flow regimes in mind. At this time of uncertainty, an implementation plan with built-in flexibility seems prudent.

q) Provide law enforcement patrols and coverage for all developed and undeveloped areas. Pursue opportunities for shared services between all government agencies and IPC.

r) Provide maintenance coverage for all developed and undeveloped areas. Opportunities for shared services between agencies and IPC should be pursued.

K. MANAGEMENT LIMITATIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Land Limitations

BLM recognizes that existing and expected recreation demand cannot be met on BLM lands alone. Although BLM manages a considerable amount of land along the reservoirs, much of the land is steep and will remain undeveloped. BLM strongly encourages looking for other opportunities to meet recreation needs including land acquisition, encouragement of private sector developments, and consideration of site improvements on IPC, USFS, and other lands.

Planning Uncertainties

Future operational flows for the project are unknown at this time and will have a great effect on recreation planning. The physical characteristics of the BLM sites limit development options. The proposals in this document are suitable for a reasonable range of reservoir operating levels. Decisions about facilities for the greater complex will need to be tied to flow regimes.

Visitation numbers for the life of the license are uncertain with a potential wide range of variation. Use can be expected to continue to correlate with reservoir operating levels. Population growth is currently slow in Eastern Oregon and rapid in the greater Boise area. Implementation plans must be flexible to allow for changes in demand.

Budget Projections

BLM has serious recreation backlog maintenance problems on a national level. Locally, BLM funding for recreation maintenance has been diminishing with a steady downward trend for the last several years. The future budget forecast shows another decrease anticipated between fiscal year 2000 and fiscal year 2001. Projected level budgets in 2001-2005 are

expected to lead to gradually diminishing services and quality of experiences on public lands.

Current BLM maintenance budgets allow for minimal care of recreation facilities with most of the efforts being directed to a couple of developed sites. Dispersed areas get limited attention. Sanitation, safety and liability concerns are growing. Increasing operational costs are expected for meeting health and safety regulations at BLM recreation sites. Potable water delivery systems, vault toilets, and fish cleaning stations are all subject to new regulations and requirements with additional costs anticipated in the near future.

BLM does not anticipate increased or adequate funding to implement these projects in the next few years without outside assistance. Construction, operations, and maintenance costs may be provided by Idaho Power depending upon the terms of the new license. Other funding sources will be pursued, as well. BLM must use caution in facility development without associated long-term maintenance dollar commitment.

Law Enforcement Capabilities

Lack of law enforcement presence has been often identified as a concern by visitors and private land owners in the area. The intermingled land ownership and the number of agencies and entities with management responsibility in the area make efficient patrols difficult, regardless of funding. An easy solution to this is not anticipated. Cooperative efforts should continue to find creative solutions to provide better public service at an efficient cost.

Opportunities

Opportunities may exist for some exchanges of recreation site management responsibility or ownership. There may be some potential for greater efficiencies by grouping resources geographically and reducing drive time for operations and maintenance.

Some cost savings opportunities may exist in using shared services and equipment.

Improving recreation opportunities for disabled people and bringing facilities into compliance with the American's with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 is a likely outcome of the relicensing process. The use of the "universal" site design concept will be beneficial to all users and an aging population. Universal site design refers to camping spurs and facilities that are level, barrier-free, and accessible to disabled users as well as the general public.

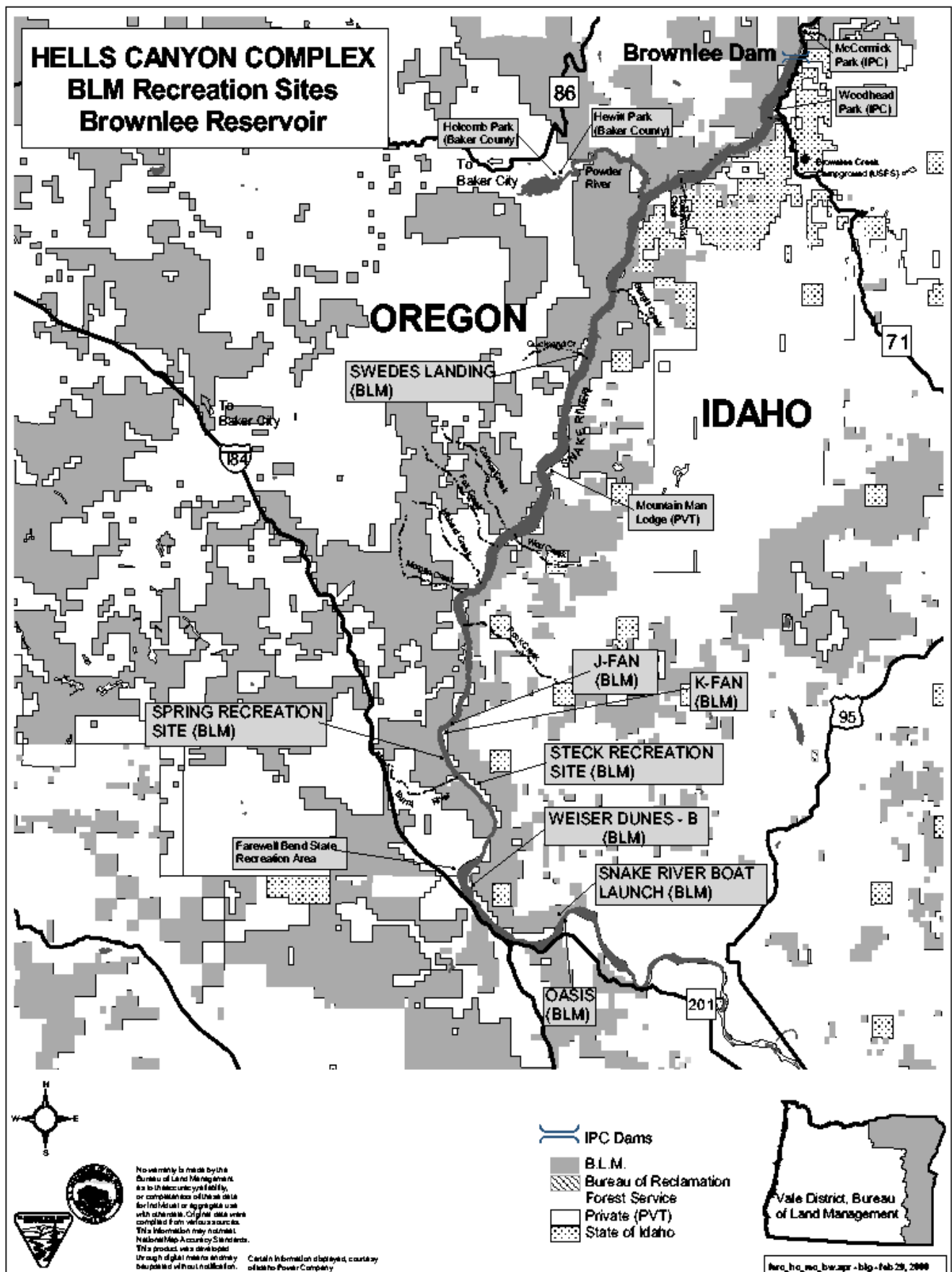
Opportunities for pursuing some projects prior to relicensing may exist. BLM should be positioned to

take advantage of these opportunities whenever they may exist.

The selected PM&E measures that result from the relicensing process are expected to be implemented in a phased approach rather than all at one time. Public comment will be a useful tool in helping to prioritize projects. Site specific project plans and NEPA analysis will be required for all projects, with additional opportunities for public comment. The opportunity for balancing recreation interests with all resource concerns must be accomplished at this time.

The relicensing process has already facilitated communications among those concerned with the future operation of the Hells Canyon Complex. BLM should continue coordination efforts with the Hells Canyon counties, local governments, and tribal governments, and IPC now and in the future for efficiency, consistency, and collaboration on shared goals.

BLM proposals for recreation developments will need to be flexible and dynamic to take into consideration facility development on other lands, changing conditions, and the comprehensive recreation picture as it evolves through the relicensing process.



HELLS CANYON COMPLEX BLM Recreation Sites Hells Canyon Dam Reservoir

OREGON

IDAHO

Big Bar
(USFS)

Hells Canyon
Trailhead (USFS)

COPPER CREEK
(BLM)

Holbrook A
(PVT)

Holbrook B
(PVT)

AIRSTRIPE A
(BLM)

Bob Creek A
(IPC)

Bob Creek B
(IPC)

BOB CREEK C
(BLM)

WESTFALL
(BLM)

Copperfield Launch
(IPC)

Copperfield Park
(IPC)

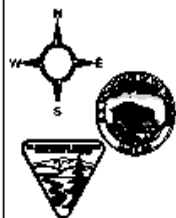
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Oxbow Launch
(IPC)

Oxbow
Dam

Hells Canyon
Park (IPC)

To
Baker City



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This information may not meet
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This product was developed
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be updated without notification.

Certain information displayed, courtesy
of Idaho Power Company

IPC Dams

- BLM
- Bureau of Reclamation
Forest Service
- Private (PVT)
- State of Idaho



Vale District, Bureau
of Land Management

hrc_hc_rec_hwc apr - big - feb 28, 2009

REFERENCES & ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The following BLM staff assisted in writing and editing this document. Staff was from Baker Resource Area unless otherwise noted.

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Mary Oman - Cultural Resources
Walt Wood - Forester
Penny Woods - Area Manager

The staff of Idaho Power contributed much information including GIS files, preliminary survey results, demographic and economic information, and recreation site inventories.

Additional information was used from the following Idaho Power publications:

Idaho Power. Formal Consultation Package for Relicensing - Hells Canyon Project FERC No. 1971, January 1997. Volume 1-3.

Idaho Power. Hells Canyon Complex Recreation Use Studies Dispersed Site Inventory (Reservoir Areas) Interim Report. October 1999.

Idaho Power. Detailed Recreation Study Plans. September 29, 1999.

Other references:

Idaho Department of Labor. Ada County Job Services Economic Profile. Fall 1999. www.labor.state.id.us.

Oregon Employment Department 2000 Regional Economic Profile - Region 13. November 1999.

U.S. Census Bureau - U.S. Department of Commerce. County Populations Estimates for July 1, 1999. www.census.gov.

COMMENT FORM
for
Oregon & Idaho BLM Conceptual Recreation Plan
for Hells Canyon Complex

*Please submit this form, or any format of your choosing, no later than **June 5, 2000**. For maximum effectiveness please keep comments focused on recreation management on BLM lands and the proposals outlined in this plan. There will be other opportunities to comment on all issues. Your comments are appreciated and will be taken into consideration.*

1. My concerns and priorities for the recreation management of BLM lands in this area include: (examples: need more utility hookups, want more or less development, want this site improved first, areas you would like access to, etc.)

2. My feeling about the proposals in this plan are: (examples: liked them because... or didn't like them because..)

3. Please keep the following in mind when planning for the future of this area: (examples: like camp spaces for multiple vehicles, need accessible facilities, concern for fees.)

4. Any other comments that will help us define **your** desired future condition for recreation on BLM lands in this area:

Name	
Mailing address	
City & State	Zip code
Check box if you would like to be added to BLM's recreation mailing list.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Check box if you would like to be added to Idaho Power's recreation mailing list.	<input type="checkbox"/>

Mail comments by **June 5, 2000** to: Vicki Kellerman - Recreation Planner
BLM Baker Resource Area
3165 10th Street
Baker City, OR 97814